GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1004
ANSWERED ON:01.03.2000
ISSUE OF PASSPORTS OF HIJACKERS OF IA
PRABHUNATH SINGH

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item appearing in the Hindustan Times dated January 26, 2000 under caption `False passports`;

(b) if so, the facts and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the details of modus operandi adopted by Ibrahim Athar, the leader of the gang that hijacked IC-814 to Kandhar, who managed to easily secure the passports in a matter of two days from the Bombay Passport Office;

(d) whether the employees of the Bombay Passport office those have involvement in issue of passports been identified;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) the action taken against them; and (g) the steps taken to tighten the grip of the law on the unscrupulous and unwanted people in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) & (c) As per the concerned investigating agencies an alleged Pakistani national Ibrahim Athar separately applied for two passports at RPO, Mumbai from different addresses and undertwo different names. The two passport applications were processed in a routine manner as followed for all applications including verification by the police. There was no expediting or out of turn processing of the two applications.

(d), (e) & (f) The investigating authorities have arrested three employees of the Regional Passport Office, Mumbai. Inquiries are going on and involvement, if any, of any official can be confirmed only after completion of investigations.

g) The Government remains committed to be vigilant against applications by undesirable elements for the issue of passports.